ryots in the villages and not by the people in urban areas. In regard to the expenditure of public money, it was necessary that some fixed standard should be recognised such as population or revenue of each taluk. The present system of financial adjustment revealed the fact that the allotment became less and less as one proceeded from the south to the north and the Kottayam Division got the least amount as was evident from the absence of even the indispensable means of communication. The same was the case in regard to schools and hospitals. The impression of the people in the country parts was that a school or a hospital was given to such areas as had clusters of houses and not to localities which had detached homesteads, even though the latter might be larger in number for the same area. The aim of Government, no doubt, was that all conveniences should be given to the people both in the country parts and in the towns. But the defect chiefly lay in the fact that the Heads of Departments did not fully realise those aims. What was worse, officers of the lower grade *i. e.*, those drawing Rs. 100 and less, were corrupt and they did not deal with the people in the proper manner. Very often those officers considered the people as slaves and tried to worry and annoy them in view to obtain illegal gratification. They were also showing distinctions of caste in the matter of the loaves and fishes of office as a result of which all classes did not get their due share of appointments in the State Service. The Member advocated that merit should be recognised, irrespective of caste or creed, and that those possessing the highest qualification should be preferred. The principle, he explained, was not being followed in practice.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

135. Government and the Public.

Mr. P. M. Narayana Kurup (Member, Chirayinkil taluk) observed that hearty and willing co-operation of the people with Government in all measures of public utility was an essential condition of a stable and well-ordered system of administration. The Member was of opinion that such co-operation was wanting here, for the ways of the officials were always in the direction of self-interest and illegal gratification. They never tried to enquire whose money it was that they were drawing as fat salaries, what their duties by the people were; nor did they understand that really they were the servants of the people. When famine was stalking in the land and when people were suffering all forms of hardships on account of high prices of food stuffs, there were officials who, instead of saving the poor people from starvation, colluded with the merchants and enriched themselves. Besides, there were also officers in the Judicial, Forest, Education and Land Revenue Departments who were corrupt. If administrators of justice were swayed by illegal considerations, what could be more harmful to the welfare of the people? In the Forest Department timber was being sold to foreigners at rates less than those at which it was sold to local merchants. The Education Department which was the most innocent had now become subject to serious defects. The Land Revenue Department had some officers who had come to tolerate rampant corruption in connection with the management of Devaswoms, while the disposal of *puduval* lands by the Revenue authorities was an open door to objectionable ways and practices on the part of the officials.

Dewan.—The Member and the previous speaker attribute corruption to officers of the lower grade. Any stranger not knowing Travancore is likely to be led to believe that Travancore is hopelessly corrupt, and that the people are entirely at the mercy of such without character or control from central authority. Travancoreans know what value should be given to such remarks. For the information of those who may not be fully acquainted with the conditions of Travancore, I would say that the allegations of this kind are wholly unfounded and unjustifiable. I am not to be understood as saying that the State service as a whole is spotless or free from corruption. It may be there are some black sheep amongst the subordinate service, but a wholesale condemnation of the kind made is unjustifiable, human nature being what it is. I may add, as a result of my experience of Travancore and intimate contact with officials and non-officials in the State during the past several years, that the Travancore service has nothing to be ashamed of in comparison with the public service elsewhere.

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The Member then referred to the abrogation of the rule which once laid down restrictions on foreigners acquiring landed property in Travancore or engaging themselves in any kind of land transaction without the previous sanction of His Highness' Government. He explained in detail how such a policy would affect the future interest of natives even in regard to getting house-sites for them. Another source of grievance to the ryots was the unnecessary and vexatious restrictions imposed by the Arms Regulation on the agricultural population who could not use their guns for the protection of their crops from wild animals. He next objected to the appointment of foreigners in the State and was of opinion that, if natives with the requisite qualifications were not available, they should be deputed for the necessary training and then raised to positions of trust and responsibility in preference to outsiders. In conclusion, the Member pleaded for a Regulation being passed to give the representatives of the people a real voice in the administration of the State, so that corruption and other evil influences might be stopped.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

The Assembly adjourned at 6 P. M.

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